



FIA Matters!

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Submit stories by e-mail to FIA-Newsletter@michigan.gov

Today's big story

Human Resource Optimization Project

From Michael Downer, Director
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The Human Resources, or HR, Optimization Project is part of the continuing effort to increase efficiency in delivering routine human resource information and services to state employees. In order to do this, all employees will be required to access basic HR information using certain new tools. These tools build on current self-service functionality, enhance online HR information, and create a new HR Service Center. Together, these three tools form **MI HR**—or my HR.

MI HR Self-Service

Most of you are already familiar with self-service and it will continue to be the place where you can: directly update your own records; direct deposits; mailing address & home phone; e-mail address; emergency contacts; family status; open enrollment; SECC campaign; qualified parking; and beneficiaries (soon). In addition, you can get these updated information and forms: earnings statements; insurance coverage; tax W-4 withholding forms; Flexible Spending accounts; leave balances; Civil Service training record; certification/applicant records; Savings Bonds and beneficiary forms.

MI HR Information

Coming this fall is a new online access to HR information. It is tailored to you and your employment situation. It is written in an easy-to-understand format to cover the basic benefit, payroll and HR issues that most of you have at some point in your state career.

MI HR Service Center

Just a phone call away this fall will be the new Customer Support Center. From early morning through early evening, the center will have a core of trained HR customer service representatives whose job is assisting you with questions or resolving problems related to your HR information. They will help you understand and navigate MI HR and assist you with making changes in MI HR Self-Service.

Although the Office of Human Resources will not exist as you now know it, Personnel Services and Labor Relations will continue to assist you with strategic issues like classifications, selections, recruitment, labor relations, performance management, disability management and payroll processing.

Watch for more information this summer and visit the MI HR Employee Self-Service gateway page through Human Resources Homepage on the FIA-Net or through the Michigan Department of Civil Service Web site at www.michigan.gov/mdcs



Gov. Jennifer Granholm, state officials and families whose children attend the Family Resource Center in Lansing's Grand River Magnet Elementary School announced the program expansion June 15. The governor showed her support for the Detroit Pistons (left), who won the NBA championship that evening.

FIA school program to expand Family Resource Centers will be established in 20 new schools beginning in September

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm announced June 15 that 20 more **Family Resource Centers** will open in Michigan schools when the new school year begins in September. This will bring to 39 the number of centers operating in Michigan schools.

Family Resource Centers have been established in selected elementary and middle schools to help the schools improve academic performance by creating more efficient access to community services.

In addition, the centers have goals to increase parental involvement and decrease absenteeism and behavior problems in school. The centers channel child and family services provided by state and local agencies in the school building. The FIA has relocated staff at the first 19 centers.

For more on the announcement including the new schools, [click here](#).

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Facelift on Franklin Street

From Mary A. Schoen, Administrative Assistant
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If you have ever visited the Franklin Street FIA Office in Kent County, you know it is a pretty dreary place. The building was an old high school founded in 1920 that was converted for FIA in 1974. That has all changed thanks to the imagination and talents of [Linda Thelen](#), secretary to the county director [Andrew Zylstra](#).



Under Linda's direction the building has had a new facelift. In an effort to improve on staff morale and give them a more enjoyable work environment, Linda has transformed the building into an aesthetically inviting work place. On a shoestring budget Linda has shown her talent to make something out of nothing. Her biggest accomplishment was transforming the stark break room into an authentic looking Bistro Café. Our staff were excited to come to work each week to see what new

things they would find in the building, thanks to Linda. You would have to see it to believe it.

Linda's enthusiasm for this project was contagious. She recruited several co-workers to join in, as well as many of her own family members, and they all donated their time and talents to the job. The result is a beautifully transformed building that has created a much better working environment for everyone at Kent County. These are truly dedicated employees that have gone well above and beyond the duties of their job.



Kent County has started a new "Kids' Reading Corner" in their lobby. Volunteers are available on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8–10 A.M. to read to children as their parent's wait to see their caseworkers.

Otsego & Crawford FIA participate in local preschool fairs

From Martha Burns, Community Resource Coordinator
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Otsego and Crawford County FIA were involved with preschool fairs in their respective communities in May. The first preschool fair in Crawford County was a gathering of parents and children involved in the local preschool programs. The second was a Family Fun Fair sponsored by Great Starts in collaboration with the Early On council.

Volunteer Tracy Gallagher developed a simple craft project for children and parents to do together at the FIA booth, making bookmarks with colorful stickers and markers. FIA also gave away children's books that had been donated by the Public Enrichment Foundation. We gave away more than 200 children's books to local families as a way of encouraging parents and children to read together. FIA also gave away a wonderful book – called "Raising Healthy Children" – to each parent that attended.

Otsego County FIA staff participated in their local Pre-School Fair by exercising their artistic talents and creating face paintings on children who attended. Staff who put their painting skills to work reported that they were sure that all 800 children who attended had their faces painted.

"We had cramped fingers but had a lot of fun," said artist-employee Cindy Pushman.



Above: Volunteer Tracy Gallagher helps a Crawford County preschooler and mother make a bookmark in Grayling.

Left: Tracy hold a future preschool student, Chloe Murphy, at the Family Fun Fair.

Surprise luncheon for social committee

From Kerry Dean, Office Supervisor
Bay County FIA, Bay City
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Bay County FIA hosted a surprise luncheon May 25 to honor their Social Committee and to commend them for all their fundraising and morale-building efforts.

Kathy Cholak-Jones, Bay-Arenac FIA director, presented each committee member with a certificate of appreciation. Committee members received a laminated thank-you place mat signed by employees that



Lori Zaverucha, committee chairperson, receives her certificate of appreciation from Bay-Arenac FIA director Kathy Cholak-Jones.

participated, a potted plant, and a Pampered Chef present.

The Social Committee commits countless hours of their time to host special event luncheons and special afternoon treats to bolster morale. Their fundraising activities have provided financial assistance over the years to the following community resources – Foster Parent Association, Family to Family, Created for Caring, Center Plaza Care Center, Walk for Warmth, Community Baby Shower, Back to School Project, CAN Council and Women's Center. They also contributed care packages for troops in Iraq and purchased bus tokens and other items for our customers.

Bay County employees voluntarily contributed \$3 for a gift donation and either brought a passing dish or contributed \$5 for the luncheon.

Remaining proceeds generated from the luncheon were donated to the committee to help sponsor future events and for fundraising projects.

Special thanks go out to all the wonderful people responsible for organizing this special event.

Mother's Day celebration

From Billy Holland, District Manager
Oakland County Baldwin Road District, Pontiac
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On May 17, the Baldwin Road Office held a gala celebration in honor of Mother's Day. All staff were invited to assemble in the conference room to enjoy cake and ice cream. The district Moms were seated at specially decorated tables and the men of the office personally served them their refreshments. In addition, the men presented each Mom a red rose. The celebration also included a Mom's raffle. Prizes included nine table decorations and a bouquet of roses. The occasion was completed with a presentation about the history of Mother's Day. It was a fun filled activity enjoyed by all. District I has a total of 49 mothers in the district. Thirty of them were able to attend all or part of the celebration.



Oakland County FIA Baldwin Road District mothers pose for a photo with their roses.

Social Committee members seated (from left) around the table – Deb Akans, Amy Majeski, Marilyn Krauseneck, Ron Lemmon, Lori Zaverucha, Linda Schultz, Terri O'Neil, and Deb Lloyd. (Absent from the event: Vivian Roth, and Star Lopez).



**Your letters,
intercepted
and otherwise**

Date: June 15
To: Carol Fischhaber
Subj: Carl Martin

Genesee County's adult services units are located in the McCree District. As the district manager, I chair a committee known as the Multidisciplinary Team. The team is composed of staff from FIA, Legal Services of Eastern Michigan, Family Services Agency, the county Sheriff's Office, the county Prosecutor's Office and, occasionally, nursing homes. We meet every other month to discuss issues related to adult services, especially financial exploitation cases.

Carl Martin attended our March meeting to update us on a pending case. In the course of the meeting, he offered to contact Bill Dennis from the Attorney General's office to see if he would be willing to make a presentation to our group. I really appreciate his efforts in arranging this. I'm sure it involved extra work to make the contacts and follow up on the request.

As a result of Carl's efforts, Mr. Dennis attended our May meeting. He played an excellent video concerning exploitation of adults and presented material concerning identity theft. It was a very interesting and informative meeting, thanks in large part to Carl.

Barbara Anders, District Manager

Genesee County FIA McCree District, Flint

■ *Carol Fischhaber and Carol Martin work for FIA Office of Inspector General, Fischhaber as a manager, Martin as an agent. Both are stationed in Genesee County.*

Date: June 9
To: FIA Matters!
Subj: Locks of Love

I wanted to express congratulations to **Darla Decker** (whose story was) in the June 9 newsletter. I recently donated 24 inches of my ponytail of 8 years to the same organization, Locks of Love. It is a great organization and does great work. Most hair salons have the address and will forward your donation for you. All you have to do is have 10 inches of hair or longer and request that they do so. It is truly a great cause. Way to go Darla. Your contribution will bring joy to the children Locks of Love serves.

Jay Younger

Disability Determination Service, Detroit

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Date: May 28
To: Denise Chambers, Director
Genesee County FIA, Flint
Subj: Sue Hull

Following is a portion of an email that I sent today to **Sue Hull**: Thanks for your help on May 21. (Someone) was about to leave the training seminar when I told her to contact you in regards to one of her children. She was visibly upset when she thought that one of her children was in distress. After she spoke with you she told me and everyone at our table: "I like that Sue Hull. I don't have to worry about my kids because FIA in my county takes care of kids".

Her timing was excellent because we had just told the entire room that we must live in utopia because Genesee County FIA did their job (and) was comprised of individual workers who were each dedicated to the kids on their caseload. (She said) even when the L-GALs and FIA disagreed, we had no doubts in regards to their integrity and dedication to the children.

Karen Bunker

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■ *Sue Hull is district manager at Genesee County Children's District in Flint. An L-GAL is a legal guardian ad litem – a court-appointed attorney.*

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